

HOONAH, ALASKA PROPERTY

Proposition to grant deeds to natives
for small plots of ground on which to
erect their homes.

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A. - Premise

The Board owns 15.6 acres, the only land in Hoonah available for building purposes.

This land, used and cultivated by the Native years before the missionary began work there, was acquired by Patent from the Government for "missionary uses and purposes."

Before the Board began work at Hoonah deplorable living conditions existed, the natives crowding in community houses; privacy or family life was unknown.

By permission of a former missionary a few natives, members of the Hoonah Church and citizens of the United States, through commendable thrift, erected on the Board's land, small houses at their own expense.

Other natives in good standing, are now awaiting the hoped for consent of the Board to deed them plots of ground on which they expect to build their houses.

The natives are well aware that this land was obtained by the Board upon the plea that it was needed for mission purposes, and now ask that, as citizens of the United States, they be given for themselves and heirs the same title accorded to white men, i.e. deeds in fee simple without restrictions.

B. - RECOMMENDATION OF PRESBYTERY

1. That deeds in fee simple to plots not exceeding 100 X 100 feet, be given to the natives who have already erected houses on the Board's land.
2. That a right of occupancy to plots 100 X 100 feet be granted to a limited number of natives for one year, and if within the year the occupant shall build thereon an acceptable house, then and in that event, a deed in fee simple will be given.
3. That the granting of these deeds be restricted to natives and only to those who are approved by the Home Mission Committee of Alaska Presbytery and the Session of the Hoonah Church.

C. - ACTION OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The Executive Council considered the reference made to it by the Board of the recommendation from the Home Mission Committee of the Presbytery of Alaska that deeds in fee simple be given to the native Indians who desire to erect their homes on the Board's property. The Council voted that in addition to the Presbytery's recommendation, two suggested alternative forms of reservation be presented to the Board with the recommendation that the Board refer the matter to the Committee on work in Alaska for joint consideration with the Council and final recommendation to the March meeting of the Board. These alternative suggestions are as follows:

1. That deeds be granted in fee simple to Indians already having erected homes on the Board's property and to other Indians who will within a year erect suitable homes for themselves.

Recommend # 2

2.

✓ 2. That deeds be granted with the proviso that the land so conveyed shall not be sold to a white man unless consent of the Board is first obtained.

3. That deeds be granted with the condition attached that in case the grantee or his heirs contemplate, at any time, the sale of the land so transferred, he will offer it first to the Board of Home Missions for re-purchase at a price to be determined by an impartial appraiser, selected jointly by himself or his heirs and by the Board.

4. Whichever form of conveyance may be adopted by the Board, that deeds be granted only to those natives who shall have received the approval of the Home Mission Committee of Alaska Presbytery and the Session of the Hoonah Church.